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Hunting and Fishing

Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge

Idaho

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Signs Protect Visitors and Resources

Millions of people visit National Wildlife Refuges every year. Millions! The impact of humanity descending upon refuges, if not regulated in part, can degrade these wildlands. Signs grant or restrict certain activities to provide optimum freedom for visitors while also protecting refuge elements from undue human abuse. Please respect the following signs.:

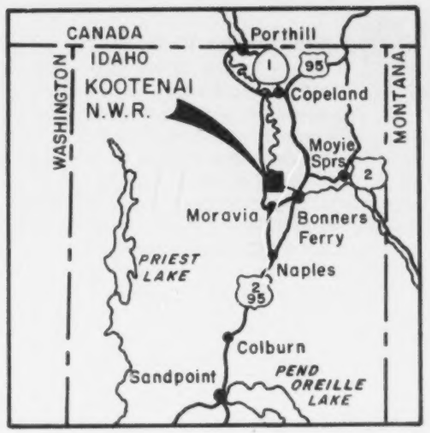
This sign delineates the refuge boundary. You may enter the area only on designated access routes.

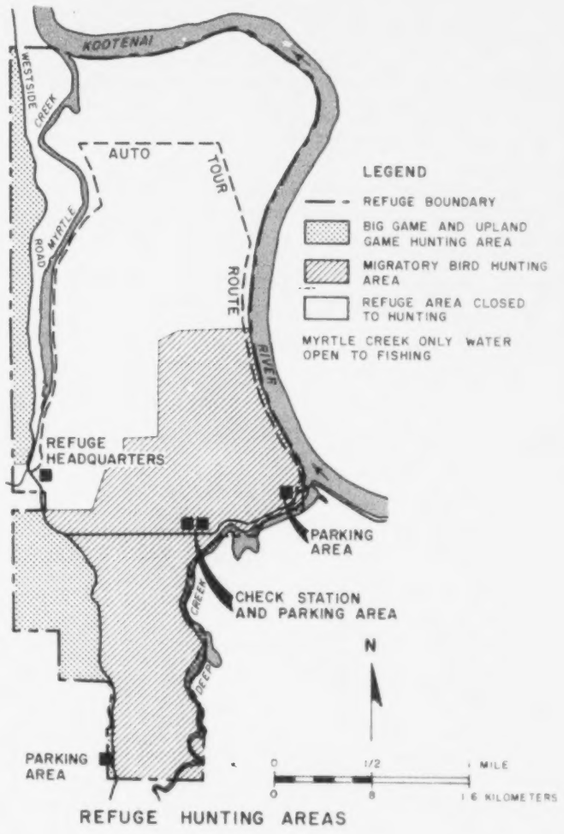
Used alone or beneath a refuge boundary sign. The area behind this sign may be hunted as permitted by refuge regulations.

Used alone or beneath a refuge boundary sign. The area behind this sign may be fished as permitted by refuge regulations.

You may pass through this area to get to hunting units. You may retrieve downed birds. Loaded firearms are prohibited.

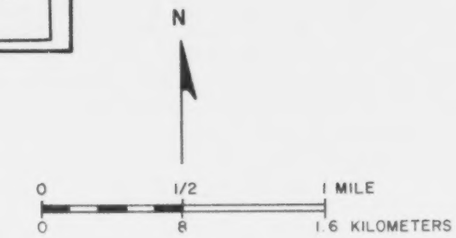
This area is closed to ALL entry. No hunting, fishing or sightseeing is permitted. No roads or trails are open to the public.

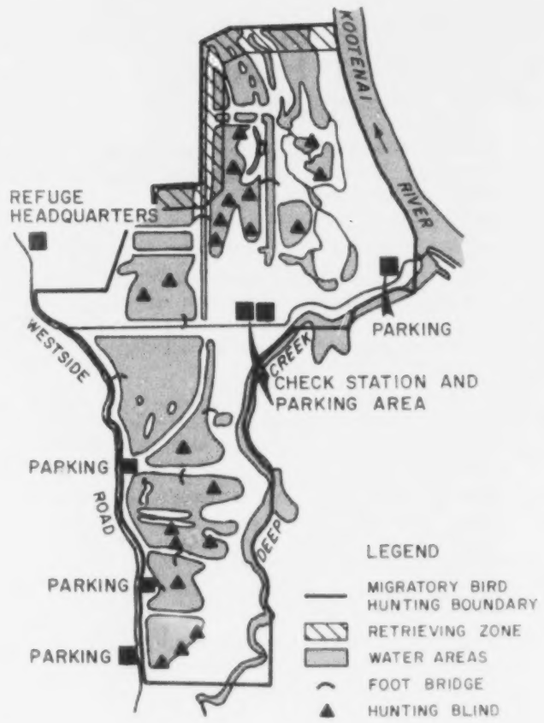




REFUGE HUNTING AREAS

DETAILED MAP MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING AREA





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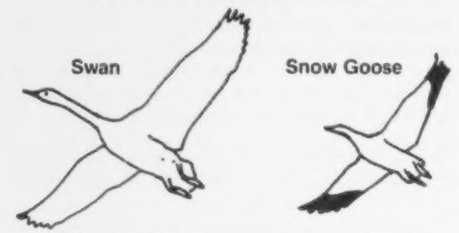
Do Not Shoot Swans



Know what you are shooting!

Shooting swans is prohibited. Each fall swans visit the refuge. Many fly across the waterfowl hunting area. Swans are much larger than snow geese and do not have black wingtips.

For Your Enjoyment and Safety

- Hip boots or chest waders are essential for your comfort and to retrieve downed birds. Beware of deep water in ditches, usually adjacent to dikes.
- "Skybusting" or shooting at birds over 50 yards from you results in excessive crippling losses of waterfowl and reduced opportunity for good shots by you and other hunters. Consult the attached chart to judge the distance to flying waterfowl.
- The use of a trained dog is encouraged. A good dog will speedily retrieve your game that otherwise might not be found and also lessens disturbance to flying birds in the area.
- Decoys and calls help bring birds into ideal shooting range. When setting out decoys, place the outer decoy at 40 yards from the blind. This will help you judge when to shoot and result in fewer cripples and more birds in your bag.
- Respect the rights of other hunters. Train your dog and practice duck calling **before** you come hunting. When entering or leaving the field, try to avoid flaring birds which are working another hunter's set-up. Interference with another's hunting, long-range shooting and unsportsman-like behavior could be cause for revocation of hunting privileges.

Quality Hunting Depends on You!

The Refuge

Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge, comprising 2,762 acres, is in the northern panhandle of Idaho five miles west of Bonners Ferry. It is located between the Kootenai River and the Selkirk Mountains about twenty miles from Canada. Kootenai Refuge was created in 1965 when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service purchased the land with money received from the sale of Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps.

The primary purpose of the refuge is to provide resting and feeding habitat for migrating waterfowl. Secondarily, nesting habitat is managed for waterfowl and other migratory birds. Public activities are encouraged, including wildlife observation, fishing and hunting.

Concentrations of waterfowl occur on the refuge during the spring and fall migrations. In the fall, up to 35,000 ducks and 4,000 geese are present. Common species include mallard, pintail, American wigeon, green-winged teal and Canada geese.

A small population of trout lives in Myrtle Creek, including rainbow, eastern brook and cutthroat trout. A small run of kokanee spawns in the creek each fall.

Sport fishing and hunting of certain species are permitted in designated areas in accordance with applicable State and Federal regulations, including refuge regulations.

To reach the refuge from Bonners Ferry, take the dike road on the south bank of the Kootenai River westward for five miles to the refuge.

General Regulations

Day Use Only—Camping or overnight parking are prohibited.

Vehicles—Vehicle travel is permitted only on county roads and the designated Auto Tour Road. Vehicles are not permitted off roads or on dike trails. Only vehicles registered for highway use are permitted on the refuge.

Dogs—Dogs must be kept under close control and are not allowed to run free.

Weapons—Guns or other hunting weapons are permitted on the designated hunting areas during the hunting seasons. At other times, they may be transported through the refuge in vehicles when unloaded and cased, or dismantled.

Protected Species—Only species listed in this leaflet may be killed in permitted areas. Please protect all other wildlife.

Fires—Fires are prohibited.

Littering—Please help us put litter in its place. Deposit empty shell cases and trash in barrels provided in parking areas.

Accidents—All accidents and injuries occurring on the refuge should be reported immediately at refuge headquarters. Phone (208) 267-3888.

Fishing Information

Areas Open and Seasons—Only Myrtle Creek is open to fishing where primarily trout are caught. Open dates and bag limits are concurrent with the State General Season for rivers and streams in Area 1.

License—All anglers 14 years of age and older must have a valid Idaho State Fishing License.

Boats—Fishing from boats without motors is permitted on Myrtle Creek.

Hunting Information

Species—Wildlife that may be hunted include:
Migratory Birds - geese, ducks, mergansers, coots and common snipe.
Upland Game - blue, spruce and ruffed grouse.
Big Game - deer, elk, moose, black bear and mountain lion.

All other species of wildlife are protected and may NOT be killed. Know your game.

Seasons—Dates, hunting hours and bag limits for the species listed above correspond to the State regulations. For restricted days of waterfowl hunting see Special Regulations.

Hunting Areas—Hunting is permitted only in two areas designated as open to hunting on the map in this leaflet.

- Migratory bird hunting area in the southern part of the refuge east of the Westside Road.
- Upland game and big game hunting area west of the Westside Road.

License—All hunters must have a valid Idaho State Hunting License and waterfowl hunters 16 years of age or older must also have a Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp).

Special Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations

Waterfowl Hunting Days—Permitted only on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays during the State season.

Shell Limit—Hunters are limited to the use and/or possession of no more than 25 shotgun shells per day.

Inspection of Hunter and His Property—Hunting on Kootenai Refuge constitutes an agreement by the hunter that his person, vehicle and hunting equipment are subject to inspection at any time while on the refuge.

Retrieving Zone—Hunters may enter the posted retrieving zone to retrieve downed birds or to travel to or from hunting sites, but all firearms must be unloaded. Decoys may not be set in the zone.

Blinds—Blind construction is limited to vegetation which will easily decompose or to portable materials which are removed at the conclusion of each hunt. Pit blinds are prohibited. Blinds do not become the property of the builder and are available to all persons on a first-come basis.

Personal Property—Decoys and hunting equipment cannot be placed on the hunting area prior to actual hunting. All personal property must be removed from the refuge at the conclusion of the hunt.

Boats—Waterfowl hunters may use boats without motors.

Handicapped Visitors—The refuge covers a variety of habitats including rough, uneven terrain, deep water, dense stands of vegetation and ditches, etc. Rainfall makes trails and fields muddy and slippery and more difficult to negotiate. People should examine their abilities and limitations before using the refuge. Handicapped persons should fish or hunt with a partner and consult the refuge manager for suggestions for using the area safely.

Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge is one of a system of refuges administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is dedicated to the preservation and conservation of wildlife. The financial base for this system was established in 1934 through the passage of the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act. This Act requires waterfowl hunters to purchase an annual migratory bird or "duck stamp". Funds collected from duck stamp sales have been used to purchase numerous refuges that provide habitats necessary to sustain a variety of wildlife for both hunters and non-hunters to enjoy.

For further information, contact personnel at Refuge Headquarters or write to:

Refuge Manager
Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge
Star Route 1, Box 160
Bonners Ferry, Idaho 83805
Phone: (208) 267-3888

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

RF 14580-8 July 1982

Ducks

Gauge for judging approximate elevation of Mallard-sized ducks and Canada geese. When the page is held 20 inches from the eye, the silhouettes (from top to bottom) show the relative size of waterfowl as seen at heights of 100 feet (good shotgun range), 200 feet (outside of shotgun range) and 500 feet.

Geese